

Malverne, PA -- Today, Congressman Joe Sestak spoke to the Transportation Management Association of Chester County Legislative Breakfast. At the event, Joe spoke about transportation issues in the district, his work on the Education and Labor and Small Business Committees, and his priorities for this Congress, including transportation, education, and health-care reform.

“Traffic congestion is more than just a civic annoyance; it is an impediment to the flow of commerce,” noted Joe at the Breakfast. “Just as we must ensure that the Delaware River shipping channel can allow the largest vessels to reach our port in Philadelphia, so too must we unclog our roads to accommodate the kind of economic growth that we expect in the future in Chester County. I believe that Pennsylvania's future economic growth depends largely on the reinvigorated strength of the Chester, Delaware and Montgomery County business community, and I'm going to do everything I can to support it.”

As Joe has remarked, “each \$1 billion invested in infrastructure creates more than 40,000 jobs. Infrastructure investment is also essential to the long-term health of our economy. By improving our highways, rail lines, and airports, goods and services will flow more quickly and efficiently. It will relieve congestion and transport people to their workplace in a more efficient manner. Investing in our infrastructure not only strengthens the safety of our nation but it also creates an economic stimulus by putting people to work.

“Developing our economy is one reason I chose to serve on the Small Business Committee, because it will allow me to help shape the policies that drive small business development and entrepreneurship, which I hope will ultimately help to attract new, job-creating businesses, and to draw entrepreneurs to establish high-value added businesses in Chester, Delaware and Montgomery Counties to reverse the decline of manufacturing businesses and jobs lost in the past few decades,” added Joe.

“I am especially interested in working towards revitalizing urban commercial corridors. I hope to achieve this through building a strong linkage between academia, private business, and government to spur innovation and to provide greater access to capital to help entrepreneurs start up and expand their businesses.”

During Joe's first week in Congress, his first item of business was to restore fiscal discipline,

which had been lost with our current Administration, through implementing a “pay-as-you-go” government. Only through controlling spending would it be possible to determine the true priorities and investments which the hard-earned American tax dollars should go towards.

In Congress, Congressman Sestak has made education, healthcare, economic development, and national security his main priorities, and he selected his committee assignments to reflect those priorities. As a member of the Education and Labor Committee, he has advocated for a high quality education for all students. He also recently held two education summits to provide an opportunity for education stakeholders in the 7th Congressional district to discuss key educational issues with policy makers and education experts. The first summit consisted of panel discussions on Early Childhood, Elementary and Secondary Education, and Special Education, led by the Honorable George Miller, Chairman of the House Education and Labor Committee, and the Honorable Terrell Halaska, Assistant Secretary of Education. The second summit explored the challenges facing our Higher Education system and Advanced Training programs and included Congressman Rubén Hinojosa, the Chairman of the US House Subcommittee on Higher Education, Lifelong Learning and Competitiveness as a guest panelist.

As a member of the Health, Employment, Labor and Pensions Subcommittee and as Vice Chair of the Small Business Committee, Joe has also been working on efforts to make healthcare more affordable and more accessible for all. Recently, he successfully passed two amendments improving mental health care for our soldiers. And he held a forum last month on Mental Health and Substance Abuse Equity in Delaware County with Representative Patrick Kennedy, where Representative Kennedy spoke of this and the importance of properly addressing the needs of veterans and service members. He also cosponsored legislation that expands federal funding for stem cell research and a bill which would allow the federal government to negotiate for better Medicare prescription drug prices.

Moreover, as Vice Chairman of the House Small Business Committee, Congressman Sestak has oversight over the Small Business Administration (SBA), which includes the popular 7(a) General Business Loan Program, the 504 Certified Development Company Program, the Microloan Program, and Small Business Development Centers. The Committee conducts hearings on all the major programs of the SBA to determine their effectiveness, efficiency and determine possible options for improvements, as well as, will oversee the SBA’s performance in carrying out its statutorily mandated roles.

Born and raised in Delaware County, former 3-star Admiral Joe Sestak served in the Navy for 31 years and now serves as the Representative from the 7th District

of Pennsylvania. He led a series of operational commands at sea, including Commander of an aircraft carrier battle group of 30 U.S. and allied ships with over 15,000 sailors and 100 aircraft that conducted operations in Afghanistan and Iraq. After 9/11, Joe was the first Director of "Deep Blue," the Navy's anti-terrorism unit that established strategic and operations policies for the "Global War on Terrorism." He served as President Clinton's Director for Defense Policy at the National Security Council in the White House, and holds a Ph.D. in Political Economy and Government from Harvard University. According to the office of the House Historian, Joe is the highest-ranking former military officer ever to serve in the U.S. House of Representatives.

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